

April 2, 1975

SENATOR F. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, I want to commend Senator Fowler for straightforward objective way to do the thing that I think is absolutely necessary. I think this should appeal to two types of groups in here. I'm certainly not limiting this body to two types of groups because it's probably 49. But at least two general groups. Those that are interested in the employees, to see that they are compensated at a better level. Certainly again I would reiterate what Senator Anderson and what Senator Fowler said, what Senator Keyes said, that a straight dollar figure is certainly an advantage and enhancement for the low paid employee. So for those people that have that concern this certainly is going to be a step in the right direction. For those of you that want the image of being tight fist and frugal, and conservative, and the watchers of the taxpayers dollars, and those kind of things I say to you we can provide extra money through this program that will reduce our turnover by 4 to 5 percent, that's going to solve a lot of problems for you financially. Retraining and recycling of people will cost probably more than that million dollars ever amounted to. You can say you did that to save money. Obviously the amendment that Senator Fowler has proposed can be accomplished in an orderly procedure. It's easy to do. Almost anybody can figure out what a person is making and tack that money to it. That would see that each and every employee in this state gets that necessary fund. Again, this total amount that we're talking about will not even come close to the consumer price index of about 12.4 percent of last year. I urge the adoption of the Fowler motion.

PRESIDENT: Senator Murphy.

SENATOR MURPHY: Just briefly, and I stand corrected. If Mr. Eric is so inclined. I inquired actually what the percentage increases, and where our employees in the state were under this category. He tells me that we have roughly 12,000 employees out of our near 25,000 who are somewhere in the \$6,000 category. Without the one percent increase they will receive right at 15 percent, as an increase. Obviously those in the \$9,000 to \$10,000 group will receive a ten percent increase under our current \$468 plus 5 percent. There is a . . . the mention of mechanics. There is a forbearance against any employee, under this one percent, receiving more than a ten percent salary increase. I just once again have the feeling that we are sitting here. We are going to lay this whole thing out. Frankly I thank Mr. Peters in the Revenue Department is far more capable and in a far better position to judge what increases should be given where performance is, then we sitting here in the chamber, just as any foreman or any superintendent. I'm afraid that we have an inclination here to be all wise, beneficent, totally informed here on the floor of the Legislature. If we are, then I'm sorry, I'm one of those who is not. I do believe that the direct employer has a much better idea of what is happening. We are giving, through this formula, an advantage to those who need it. I strongly support that. I think a 15 percent increase in the lower grades is just fine. If those people are entitled to additional benefit, I'm certain the department heads will give them that increment. I suggest that if we make this change we are almost surely inviting . . . or I should